

Claims

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1. A method of assay in which a component becomes at least partly bound to a solid body characterised in that an analyte dependent parameter associated with said component is measured in a direct and continuous manner and in that said measured analyte dependent parameter is manipulated to quantitatively determine an unknown sample and in that the results of the determination are monitored continuously.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said solid body is an optical waveguide.

15 a 3. A method as claimed in ^{claim 1} ~~either claim 1 or claim 2~~ wherein said analyte dependent parameter is an optical parameter.

20 b a 4. A method as claimed in ^{claim 1, 3} ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ wherein said optical parameter is fluorescence emission.

25 b a 5. A method as claimed in ^{claim 4} ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein said solid body is in the form of a sample containment device.

6. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein said device is a capillary fill device.

30 a 7. A method as claimed in ^{claim 1} ~~any preceding claim~~ comprising the steps of
35 b m (a) calibrating the assay system for x samples, each of known analyte concentration ^(C_a) ~~(C_a)~~, by measuring continuously for each sample independently at a plurality of times (t_y) after the onset of incubation the value of an analyte-dependent parameter (P_z),
(b) for an analyte of unknown concentration (C_b) measuring continuously n independent values of an analyte-dependent parameter (P_d) each at time t_o after

the onset of incubation,

(c) combining the data (P_d, t_e) from step (b) with the calibration data (P_z, t_y, C_a) from step (a) to calculate the unknown dose of analyte (C_b) at time t_e .

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8. A method of calibrating an assay system for x samples each of known analyte concentration (C_a) comprising:

10 (a) measuring continuously for each sample independently at a plurality of times (t_y) after the onset of incubation the value of an analyte-dependent parameter (P_z); and, optionally

(b) fitting the calibration data to a standard equation.

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9. A method as claimed in claim 8 further comprising the step of storing said calibration data on a ~~means for~~ ^{data storage device} storing machine readable encoded data.

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10. A kit comprising an assay device together with ~~a means for storing~~ ^{storage device} machine readable encoded data which contains calibration data P_z, C_a, t_y as defined in claim 7 and which is adapted to cooperate with ~~a reader~~ ^{reader} for the purpose of quantitatively determining an unknown analyte.

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11. A kit as claimed in claim 10 characterised in that the data storing ~~means~~ ^{device} comprises a bar code marked on the device.

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